

# Vision Statement for the City of Falls Church

*Adopted by City Council November 27, 2006*

In 2025, Falls Church is a small city that respects its citizens and provides personal attention to meeting their needs. It is a wonderful place to live, work, and shop, offering diversity in housing, amenities, and services. Its historic charm reflects the stewardship of residents and their local government. It is built on a human scale, where visitors and residents alike can find everything they need while experiencing the fabric of life in a friendly, close-knit community. Falls Church is a shining example of a city that has been able to retain the benefits of small town life, while remaining financially sustainable, and a full participant in one of our nation's most dynamic metropolitan areas.

The people of Falls Church have built a community that expresses their belief in certain unifying principles:

## Successful Development

Falls Church City offers a harmonious mix of residential, commercial, and retail venues due to the community's focus on smart design, walkability, and human scale. Innovative, clear, and enforceable standards are in place that reflect attention to historic preservation, environmental sensitivity, and long-term sustainability. City government works closely with local counterparts to share this vision and ensure that Falls Church retains its distinctiveness and competitiveness in the region. Falls Church's City Center is a focal point where residents and visitors gather to work and play, helping to sustain the City's special sense of community and place.

## World Class Public Schools

The Falls Church City public school system is at the heart of our identity as a community. Public schools are why the City was established and have always been central to its success. The people of Falls Church remain committed to providing all children with the tools and skills necessary to achieve personal and professional success in a fast-changing and highly competitive world economy. This requires a continuing focus on outstanding staff, up-to-date facilities, innovative leadership, and the efficient use of resources.

## Neighborhood Preservation and Community Life

Falls Church welcomes the participation of its citizens in creating an environment where everyone is a neighbor. City neighborhoods are attractive, pleasant, safe, and welcoming places to live. In Falls Church, people join together to shape their streets, sidewalks, and public spaces. New development is compatible with existing neighborhood aesthetics, density, and scale. City streets and thoroughfares are tree-lined, pedestrian-friendly, and offer visitors and passersby a true window into our community and its values.

## Diversity

Falls Church is a place where people of all means and backgrounds are welcomed and encouraged to participate in all aspects of community life. Racial, ethnic, economic, and other facets of human experience enrich the community by providing it with a diverse mix of outlooks and views on world, national, and local issues and problems. In all respects, Falls Church is a vibrant and successful community because it welcomes and promotes diversity.

## Environmental Harmony

The people of Falls Church believe protecting, guiding, and investing in their environment is one of their highest callings. The City's public and private development express this belief in tangible ways. Our commitment to parks, open space, and clean waterways has been a hallmark of local government for decades. Likewise, residential and commercial development has long emphasized construction in harmony with the City's manifest natural gifts. Environmentally friendly residential and commercial buildings throughout the City incorporate the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Rating System — the nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction, and operation of high performance green buildings.

## Innovation

The people of Falls Church are leaders and innovators in many areas of human endeavor. The City capitalizes on this resource by finding and nurturing emerging ideas and bringing them together with public and private capital. Falls Church is one of the leaders among area jurisdictions in evolving and nurturing forward-thinking businesses that combine capital investment with stewardship of our natural resources. The City has a variety of special enterprise zones serving the "green technology entrepreneur" as well as the basic needs of its residents.

## **World Class Government and Public Outreach**

City Staff provide first-class, professional service to an appreciative community. The City Council and City Manager actively reach out to the citizenry to assure that the whole community is engaged in decisions affecting the City's well-being and sustainability. In this pursuit, the Council and City Staff are guided by the core values of accountability, transparency, and responsiveness. Citizens receive accurate and timely information and have every opportunity to be heard and participate in the deliberative process. At the same time, the Council acknowledges its obligation to make the difficult and, at times, unpopular decisions that are necessary to sustain the City's viability and unique small-town quality of life.

## **A Special Place**

Falls Church is a place where people enjoy doing everyday tasks, as well as experiencing diverse cultural, recreational, and civic opportunities. The Falls Church, Tinner Hill, Cherry Hill Farm, the State Theatre, and quaint 19th century homes are alive with historical meaning and testify to the City's rich heritage, which is both respected and enhanced by the 21st century redevelopment of City Center. The City is a magnet for artists, artisans and musicians, with many venues for performances and exhibits. Its dozens of fine restaurants and other eateries make it a destination of choice for residents and countless people from elsewhere in the metropolitan area. The City's vibrant, pedestrian-friendly commercial corridor and City Center includes attractive shops and boutiques, as well as retail stores that respond to every shopper's interests and pocketbook. There is always something going on in Falls Church, whether it be the Saturday Farmers Market, the famous Memorial Day Parade, concerts in the park, or one of many other events.